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Identical letters dated 28 May 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, and with reference to the monthly meeting of the Security Council to discuss the situation in the Middle East that was held on 22 May 2013, I wish to draw your attention to the following information:

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic would like to state once again that it strongly objects to and deplores the failure by Mr. Robert Serry, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, to address in the briefing he delivered at the above-mentioned meeting the situation in the occupied Syrian Golan and to set out the position of the United Nations with regard to the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, the most important of which is Security Council resolution 497 (1981). He also failed to address Israel's flagrant violations of Syria's sovereignty, including the Israeli raid of 5 May 2013 that targeted sites in Syrian territory. He failed to address the above-mentioned matters although they are the substance of the item that was being discussed, which concerns ending the Israeli occupation of Arab lands, including the Syrian Golan, and fall under his mandate as Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process.

Regrettably, in his briefing, Mr. Serry inappropriately brought up internal events in Syria, although those events are outside his mandate and have no relation whatsoever to the Middle East peace process. To make matters worse, Mr. Serry astonishingly failed to mention the armed terrorist groups that are active in the area of separation and receive assistance directly from the Israeli occupation forces and the intelligence agencies of certain Arab States, States of the region and States from outside the region that are known to all. This threatens the security and safety of United Nations forces operating in that area, particularly given that those groups have abducted personnel of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), including the abduction on 6 March 2013 of 21 soldiers belonging to the Filipino battalion and the abduction on 7 May 2013 of another four soldiers belonging to that same battalion. It was curious that Mr. Serry failed to address those abductions, although both the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Security Council have condemned those abductions, and although senior officials of the Secretariat and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations are aware of the involvement of Qatari agencies in coordinating the abduction of UNDOF personnel in the area of separation.

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In dozens of official letters and bilateral meetings with Secretariat officials, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has repeatedly warned of the danger of disregarding the situation in the occupied Syrian Golan and the terrorist groups' activities in the area of separation when briefing the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East. This most recent escalation, namely, the targeting of United Nations forces operating in the area of separation, and, in particular, the abductions, are a clear indicator of the outcome of that disregard and the danger it poses.

We would like to point out once again to the Secretariat that its officials' continued disregard of the ongoing Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan and their inappropriate reference to current internal events in Syria in their monthly briefing to the Security Council constitute a blatant violation of the terms of reference of that important item, which are based on the Council's own resolutions and the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

I should be grateful if this letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic
to the United Nations